

DCG ADVENTURE STARTER

A simplified rules to the Dark City Games role-playing system

Welcome to the Adventure Starter! This is a guide to playing ANY of the Dark City Games role-playing adventure books. Your characters, weapons, and storyline will change from adventure to adventure--but the same rules apply!

Games can be played solitaire, or in groups up to five.

Read through the rules laid provided on the following pages. This teaches you "how-to's," like moving and striking your enemy.

Copyright© 2021 Dark City Games

RULES

In Dark City Games adventures, players play characters who go adventuring. Players work together against the game. One player (GM) reads the paragraphs aloud, and tracks progress. If playing solitaire, you are the GM and the characters.

ROLE ASSIGNMENT

An adventure usually has multiple starting characters. A solitaire player plays all the characters; multiple players play one or more characters each.

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

A character has three attributes: Strength, Dexterity and Intelligence.

Strength (ST)

Strong characters inflict and survive more damage.

Dexterity (DX)

Agile characters are better able to strike, shoot, and dodge.

Intelligence (IQ)

Intelligent characters are better able to apply skills and magic.

Example

Ajax has ST14 DX10 IQ8 (32 total).

TERMINOLOGY

Dice

A six-sided die is abbreviated d6. Two six-sided dice are 2d6, three dice—3d6, etc.

Hitting a Foe

An attacker hits a foe by passing 3/DX. Roll 3d6. If the total of all three dice is the attacker's DX or less, he hits and rolls damage (Weapons & Damage).

Example

Ajax (DX10) rolls 6, 3, 1, totaling 10. This is Ajax's DX or less. He hits his foe and rolls damage.

Checking ST or IQ

Check 3/ST for physical feats, and 3/IQ for mental ones. A four-die check is abbreviated 4/ST, 4/DX, or 4/IQ.

Winning a Roll

Opponents roll as many dice as they want. The higher total wins. If a total exceeds a character's attribute, he fails.

Example

Ajax (DX10) rolls 3, 2, 1, totaling 6. His foe (DX12) rolls 6, 5, 2, totaling 13. The foe's roll is higher, but 13 exceeds his DX12. Ajax wins.

WEAPONS & DAMAGE

Weapons

Each weapon has a damage rating. Melee weapons strike adjacent foes, missile weapons shoot foes at range.

Example

Ajax carries a short sword (melee weapon), doing 2d6-1 damage.

Damage

Upon hitting a foe, roll dice indicated by your weapon's damage rating.

Example

Ajax hits a foe, and rolls 2d6, getting 3, 4. His weapon does 2d6-1, so he subtracts 1 point. He delivers 6 damage to his foe.

ARMOR

A character hit by a weapon reduces the damage he takes by the value of his armor.

Example

Ajax's foe wears armor that stops 2 hits. Ajax delivers 4 damage, not 6.

MOVEMENT ALLOWANCE

Movement

Each turn, a character can move a number of hexes equal to his DX/2, rounded down (MA). After moving, he can attack one foe (Attack).

Example

Ajax (DX10) moves five hexes and strikes his foe.

Game Board

The game board is divided into hexagons (hex) to regulate movement. The adventure book indicates where characters start on the game board.

Hex

One character occupies a hex. A character must stop upon entering a foe's hex (Tackle).

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Here are some sample characters. Characters start with 32 points, with a minimum eight point allocation to each attribute. 10 is average.

Ajax (Warrior—very strong but dumb)

Attributes: ST14 DX10 IQ8

Weapon: short sword 2d6-1

Armor: cuirass stops 1, shield stops 1

Hector (Warrior—strong, quick)

Attributes: ST11 DX11 IQ10

Weapon: spear d6+2

Armor: cuirass stops 1, shield stops 1

Alexandros (Archer—quick, not smart)

Attributes: ST10 DX13 IQ9

Weapon: bow d6, dagger d6

Armor: cuirass stops 1

Merlin (Wizard—weak, slow, smart)

Attributes: ST9 DX9 IQ14

Weapon: staff d6

Armor: wizard's cloak stops 1

Spells: Fireball 3d6-1 (costs 3F), Shatter Weapon (costs 3F).

PLAYING THE GAME

Start Reading

The GM reads the adventure aloud. Paragraphs are intentionally scrambled. Do not read them sequentially. When choosing an option, flip immediately to the corresponding paragraph.

Tracking

The GM uses a sheet of paper to record the paragraphs that the party visits. Players record their characters' damage, belongings, and experience.

Turns

Players alternate turns. The active player moves each of his characters, one at a time. The active player must complete one character's turn before going on to the next. When the player is done, the next player becomes the active player.

Character's Turn

A character moves up to his MA and can then execute ONE action. A character cannot move after his action.

Example

Ajax (DX10) moves five hexes and strikes his foe.

ATTACK

Attacker

A fighter can attack ONE foe per turn. He can strike, shoot, tackle, or grapple a foe. He cannot move after attacking.

Strike

A fighter hits an adjacent foe by passing 3/DX. If he hits, roll damage (Damage).

Example

Ajax (DX10) rolls 6, 3, 1, totaling 10. This is his DX or less. Ajax hits and rolls damage.

Shoot/Throw

A fighter with a missile/throwing weapon hits an unobstructed foe by passing 3/DX. A fighter firing a weapon cannot move in his turn; a fighter throwing a weapon can.

Example

Ajax (DX10) shoots his foe. Shooting fighters cannot move. He rolls 4, 3, 2, totaling 9. He hits and rolls damage.

Range

Missile weapon range exceeds the playing board. Throwing range is the thrower's ST in hexes.

Tackle

A fighter tackles a foe by winning DX. If the tackle succeeds, the two are now grappling in the same hex. If a tackle fails, the weaker character retreats one hex.

Example

Ajax (DX10) tackles his foe (DX11). Ajax rolls 4, 3, 3, totaling 10. His foe rolls 3, 2, 1, totaling 6. Ajax's 10 beats his foe's 6. Ajax enters his foe's hex. The two now grapple.

Grapple

Grappling characters occupy the same space, and can only fight each other. The fighter winning ST can: (1) Roll damage on his foe; (2) Exit to an empty adjacent hex; or (3) Drag his foe one hex.

Unarmed human attacks do d3 damage (no armor). The stronger fighter does an

additional +1 damage to his foe. A grappler with 2x ST of his foe moves and acts normally, carrying his foe with him.

Example

Ajax (ST14) grapples a foe (ST12). Ajax rolls 5, 4, 3, totaling 12. His foe rolls 6, 5, 4, totaling 15. Ajax wins and rolls damage.

DEFENDING

Defender

A defender can defend ONE attacker, but loses his following turn. He can dodge, counterattack, or tackle his attacker.

Dodge

A defender dodges by passing 3/DX. He retreats one hex away from his foe. If no empty hex is available, he cannot dodge. He may view the attacker's hit roll, but not damage roll, before deciding to dodge. A fighter cannot dodge a shooting weapon.

Example

A foe successful strikes Ajax. Ajax (DX10) dodges, rolling a 9. He retreats one hex away from his foe, into an empty space. Ajax loses his next turn, but he is not hit.

Counterattack

A defender surviving an attack may immediately strike or shoot his attacker. If he hits, roll damage.

Example

A foe strikes Ajax, and rolls damage. Ajax survives and counterattacks. He hits his foe but loses his next turn.

Tackle

A defender surviving a strike can tackle his foe. He tackles his foe by winning DX.

First Strike

A target of a tackle who has not defended can strike his foe first. This happens before the tackle attempt. If he hits the tackler, he rolls an extra die damage.

ZONE OF CONTROL

If an attacker, adjacent to a defender, moves to another adjacent hex without attacking, the defender can defend. The defense can be a counterattack or a tackle.

INJURY & EXHAUSTION

Death

A character accumulating damage equal to his ST or more, dies. (Characters recover all damage between adventures.)

Example

Ajax (ST14) has taken 10 damage. He is hit again, suffering another 4 damage. He has accumulated 14 damage, which equals his ST14 or more. Ajax is dead.

Exhaustion

A character falls unconscious when he accumulates (damage + fatigue) = ST or more. Fatigue recovers overnight.

Example

Ajax (ST14) has taken 10 damage. He suffers 4 fatigue. He falls unconscious, but is alive. After sleeping the night, he still has 10 damage, but no fatigue.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

A character earns an experience point (XP) per fight he wins, or per plot word he gets. He improves an attribute by spending XP = his attribute + 6.

Example

Ajax ST12 DX11 IQ10 has earned 20 XP. He increases ST to 13 by spending 18 XP (Attribute = 12 + 6).

SKILLS

A character gains a one-point skill by expending 10XP.

Example

Ajax spends 10XP for unarmed combat. When he fights unarmed, his ST/DX is +1, and he does +1 damage.

MAGIC

A magic user casts a spell instead of attacking. He cannot move when casting a spell, and he cannot be grappling. He succeeds on 3/IQ. Casting fatigues (F) the magic user, as defined by the spell he uses.

20211225